

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

The Office Action mailed June 30, 2003 has been reviewed and carefully considered. Claim 16 has been canceled. Claims 1 and 17 are amended. Claims 1-15 and 17 are pending in this application, with claim 1 being the only independent claim. Reconsideration of the above-identified application, as herein amended and in view of the following remarks, is respectfully requested.

In the Office Action mailed June 30, 2002, claims 1, 2, 5, 12, 16, and 17 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103 as unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 6,030,750 (Vermeersch) in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,823,821 (Petersen) and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,186,068 (Gelbart).

The present invention is directed to an apparatus for producing printing plates having a carrier cylinder cantilever mountable on a mounting arranged on a frame with an image setting device movable along the carrier cylinder for setting an image on a blank printing plate arranged on the carrier cylinder. The frame is a standalone structure external to a printing machine. Claim 1 has been amended to include the limitations of claim 16 and now also recites that the mounting and the image setting device are arranged on an upper surface of the frame to emphasize that the frame is specifically for a standalone device separate from a printing machine.

Vermeersch discloses a method for making a lithographic printing plate involving on press development. Vermeersch discloses that an imaging element is image-wise exposed and subsequently mounted to a print cylinder of a printing press (col. 7, lines 12-16). The imaging element is then developed while it is mounted in the printing press. Vermeersch discloses that the imaging may be performed outside of or in the printing press (col. 8, lines 28-30). Vermeersch discloses that a carrier cylinder 50 is supported in a frame but does not disclose how the carrier

cylinder is supported (col. 9, line 29). Accordingly, Vermeersch fails to teach or suggest a stand alone imaging device having a cantilever mounted carrier cylinder, as recited in independent claim 1.

Petersen discloses a driven cylinder of a rotary printing machine. Petersen discloses that such a cylinder may be cantilever mounted in a wall of a rotary printing machine as shown in Figs 2 and 3. As further shown in Fig. 3 of Petersen, the cylinders are supported against each other during printing operations (see col. 3, line 54 to col. 4, line 3). Accordingly, Petersen discloses that a printing cylinder may be cantilever mounted in a printing machine. There is no teaching or suggestions about holding a carrier cylinder for holding a printing plate in a device separate from a printing machine in which an image is set onto a printing plate, as recited in independent claim 1 of the present invention.

Gelbart fails to teach what Vermeersch and Petersen lack. Gelbart discloses a method for holding printing sleeves in an imaging device. According to Gelbart, a mandrel 1 for holding a printing sleeve 3 has one end pivotally mounted at a head end, i.e., headstock 5, of the imaging machine and a second end releasably mounted at a tail end support, i.e., tailstock 4. During imaging the mandrel is supported at both ends. To release the printing sleeve, the support of the mandrel at the tailstock is released and the mandrel is pivoted about the headstock to provide access for sliding the printing sleeve off of the mandrel (see Fig. 4). Accordingly, Gelbart teaches that the mandrel must be supported at both ends during imaging.

Of the three references, only Petersen discloses a cantilever mounting of the cylinder. However, Petersen discloses that the cantilever mounting is in a printing machine in which the entire lengths of the printing cylinders are supported against each other. This is not the configuration of a standalone imaging device such as Gelbart. In the standalone device, Gelbart

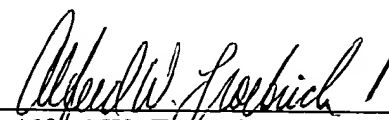
teaches that the support of both ends of the carrier cylinder is required. In fact, the goal of Gelbart was to simplify the procedure for putting a printing sleeve on the carrier cylinder. If it was obvious to provide cantilever mounting, Gelbart would have done away with the tailstock and provided a cantilever mounting so that the mandrel would not have to be pivoted to remove the printing sleeve after imaging. However, Gelbart did not provide a cantilever mounting for the imaging device even though Petersen was available as prior art at the time of the invention of Gelbart. Accordingly, the combined teachings of Vermeersch, Petersen, and Gelbart disclose that a cylinder for holding a printing sleeve or plate in a standalone imaging device is required to be supported on both sides. In view of the above remarks, it is respectfully submitted that Vermeersch, Petersen, and Gelbart fail to teach or suggest providing a cantilever mounting of a carrier cylinder in the standalone image setting device as recited in independent claim 1.

The application is now deemed to be in condition for allowance and notice to that effect is solicited.

It is believed that no fees or charges are required at this time in connection with the present application; however, if any fees or charges are required at this time, they may be charged to our Patent and Trademark Office Deposit Account No. 03-2412.

Respectfully submitted,
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